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General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

21st Meeting
Thursday, 6 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Address by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah: My congratulations, Mr. President, on your election to this high office. You are well known in United Nations circles and your election is a tribute to your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and to you.

May I also congratulate Ambassador Insanally and thank him for his great contribution. We are proud that a fellow member of the Commonwealth has served the United Nations with such skill and distinction.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome South Africa back to the General Assembly. We have long admired the courageous leadership of President Mandela in his country's struggle for freedom. He now faces equally great challenges in rebuilding South Africa. We wish him success.

I must also congratulate the people of Palestine on their courage and vision in signing the historic Peace Agreements. The people of Palestine also face the challenge of putting their painful past behind them and of building a peaceful and prosperous future. To succeed they will need the support of the international community and the United Nations.

In our region the people of Cambodia are also struggling to build a new future. The United Nations played a crucial role in Cambodia, but some obstacles remain. My country supports the efforts of King Norodom Sihanouk and his Government to rebuild and reunite Cambodia. We wish them success.

The end of the cold war has placed economics at the top of the international agenda. The challenge is how to increase economic cooperation through more trade and investment. The world now needs a stable international environment to allow this to happen. We must resist the trend towards protectionism. Instead, we must encourage and reward those who liberalize and open up their economies.

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The United Nations and its specialized agencies can help in this. But the end of the cold war has stretched the resources of the United Nations. Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia, Haiti and other trouble areas are consuming much of the limited financial and manpower resources of the United Nations, and this has reduced its role in promoting development. It is tragic that problems of development are on the back-burner. This is not the fault of the United Nations. The United Nations can do no more than its Members are willing to do.

One way to reduce the drain on United Nations resources is for regional organizations to work with the United Nations in accordance with Chapter VIII of its Charter. We may not have fully used the potential of Chapter VIII. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, regional arrangements can help to reduce the burden on the United Nations. The United Nations takes the primary responsibility for international peace and security, but regional organizations such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) can reduce its load through preventive diplomacy and regional economic cooperation. They can complement the United Nations.

Of course, there are many regional organizations; every region has its own. But not all of them work. If we are to realize the potential of Chapter VIII, we need fresh approaches to regional arrangements. Regional organizations must be realistic in their goals. They have to build a framework for cooperation which suits their conditions.

ASEAN, of which Brunei is a member, has achieved some success. ASEAN offers one possible vision of regional cooperation and development. We do not have set institutions and legal undertakings, as does the European Union. Our aim is more modest. We seek to foster a culture of cooperation. Through consultation, consensus and cooperation, we have been able to contain, resolve or reduce our differences. We have concentrated on working together for our common interests. This is a process of enlarging a set of shared values. Since ASEAN was formed in 1967, its members have evolved an informal style of sorting out their differences. Cooperation is not the result of formal agreements but comes from a strong sense of common purpose.

We are not without our problems. Most ASEAN countries have unresolved territorial questions with one another. Sensitive questions of ethnicity, culture and religion are often involved in our relations with each other. We do not deny the existence of these issues, but we continue to work together wherever we can. Differences among us do not stop cooperation for mutual benefit.

It is wiser for regional organizations to start with less ambitious goals. It took ASEAN a quarter of a century, from 1967 to 1992, to establish habits of close cooperation and consultation. Only after this was achieved did ASEAN feel confident enough to take the significant, though modest, decision to set up an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) within 15 years from 1992. We are now discussing how we can speed up AFTA and complete it within 10 years.

We have also formed a number of growth triangles straddling the adjacent territories of three or more member countries. We are all members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC), an organization for economic cooperation and trade liberalization, which will give greater opportunities to all. Because of such cooperation and the general stability of the region, trade and investments have greatly increased. All ASEAN countries are industrializing rapidly, with high growth rates.

I offer these comments on ASEAN in the hope that they can contribute to discussions that will strengthen the United Nations system. ASEAN is well aware of its own limits and limitations. ASEAN does not exist in a vacuum. We could not have succeeded without a favourable international environment.

ASEAN is not an alternative to the United Nations. Where ASEAN succeeded, as in Cambodia, it was because we worked with the major Powers within a framework defined by the United Nations. Otherwise, we would have failed. We will and must continue to work closely with the United Nations. All regional institutions need the over-arching framework of the United Nations. The United Nations, and particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, must retain primary responsibility for international peace and security.

No regional organization can succeed if it shuts itself off from the world. Our goal is an ASEAN of all South-East Asian countries. We are gradually creating what can be loosely described as a culture of peace and security in South-East Asia. We hope to extend it by linking up with other regional organizations in the Asia-Pacific region. ASEAN wants to engage all the major Powers in a pattern of constructive relations throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The ASEAN Regional Forum,

inaugurated in Bangkok in July, brings together all major and middle-sized Powers - the United States, Japan, the European Union, China, Russia, Canada, Australia, South Korea and New Zealand - in a common framework. We want the United Nations and all major Powers to associate themselves with ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is approaching. It is an appropriate occasion for us to rethink how we can strengthen the United Nations system to enable it to face successfully the challenges of the twenty-first century. I offer my comments in the spirit of contributing to our common goal of strengthening an open world that will benefit all countries.

The President *(irterpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam for the statement he has just made.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'Izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Rwandese Republic.

Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Rwandese Republic, His Excellency Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Bizimungu *(interpretation from French):* Like those who have preceded us in addressing the Assembly, we wish first of all to offer you, Mr. President, our warmest congratulations on your election to preside at this session, which attests to the trust and esteem your eminent qualities and competence inspire in the international community. Your election also constitutes a solemn tribute to your fraternal, friendly country, Côte d'Ivoire, for its important role in the concert of nations and its firm determination to contribute to the steady strengthening of cooperation. We wish to assure you that the Rwandese delegation will spare no effort to make its modest contribution to the success of your task.

We also wish to avail ourselves of this opportunity to pay a heartfelt tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for his competence, wisdom and diligence in guiding the work of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

In addition, we would like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations as an instrument for the promotion of peace and solidarity among peoples.

Finally, we warmly welcome the Republic of South Africa as a new Member of the vast family of the United Nations. That country has honoured democratic ideals by abolishing the odious system of apartheid. To be sure, the arrival of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa by means of free and democratic elections deserves to be hailed from the rostrum of this Assembly.

This forum of nations gives us a timely opportunity to expound on the problem of Rwanda, which has been in the news day in and day out.

One cannot talk about the Rwanda problem without mentioning the role the United Nations has played and continues to play in the history of our country. The history of our links is well known. It will be recalled that just after the beginning of this century Rwanda was placed under the mandate system and, later, under the trusteeship system, which then led to its independence.

This history, as has been witnessed by the international community, is riddled with unfortunate events, the most recent of which is the genocide Rwanda has just experienced. This genocide, which rivals the Nazi holocaust of the 1940s, is somewhat paradoxical because since the end of the Second World War the international community has tried to build a civilization on the foundations of respect for the fundamental rights of human beings.

While the international community was pooling its efforts to put an end to racism and racial discrimination, particularly apartheid in South Africa - whose participation in the forty-ninth session is a felicitous turn of events - at the same time an ideology akin to apartheid

was evolving in our country. That ideology, which was publicly professed by the public authorities - more precisely, by the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) and the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) parties of the late President Habyarimana - cleared the way for genocide. Plans for extermination were being openly prepared for a long time, with no trepidation whatsoever, since the power structure had long before institutionalized the violation of fundamental human rights. This is why armed opposition, in the form of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), confronted the regime beginning in 1990. Some opposition parties also emerged in 1991, thanks to the pressure exerted by the RPF.

Under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity, the countries of the subregion initiated a peace process, which the United Nations, together with a number of Western countries, later joined. We take this opportunity to thank all for their tireless efforts to ensure that the Arusha negotiations would succeed.

For more than a year the Rwandese negotiated the Arusha Peace Agreement, the principal conclusions of which addressed the establishment of a State of law in Rwanda, respect for human rights, power-sharing, the establishment without discrimination of a national army, the construction of a society based on respect for democratic principles and on national reconciliation, and the return of refugees banished from their country for more than 35 years.

The international community witnessed the intransigence of the MRND-CDR regime, which, describing the Agreement as a mere scrap of paper, hatched a plan for extermination, now recognized by the whole world as genocide. The international cameras trained on this barbaric crime revealed moments of rare cruelty. The militia, trained by the MRND and the CDR and supported by the presidential guard and by other sectors of the army, slit the throats of women, elderly people, men and children. The Rwandese countryside was strewn with corpses. Our rivers swept thousands of dead bodies downstream. Churches and schools became veritable slaughterhouses, and even now they smell of human flesh, the flesh of thousands of innocent people who had hoped to find refuge there. Piled into common graves, the victims of April's madness number thousands upon thousands.

The killing in our country was intended to disintegrate the Rwandese people, and it succeeded. Now we must make a fresh start in rebuilding the Rwandese nation. We must ensure that the various sectors of the population can coexist. We must give them a common hope and a common destiny, which, after all that has happened, has become a difficult yet indispensable task.

We have already requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help our Government in the effort to teach the Rwandese new values based on respect for fundamental human rights.

There would have been no genocide if the MRND-CDR system had abided by the spirit of Arusha. But they could not embrace the spirit of Arusha because those Rwandese Nazis were proponents of the final solution: extermination. They flouted morality, common sense, the values everyone in this Assembly believes in and, above all, the prescriptions of Arusha. Yet some who are insensitive to our suffering have asked that those Nazi parties still be allowed to hold power.

Never in history has such a scandalous privilege been sought for the organized perpetrators of similar cases of genocide. Such requests make light of our dignity as human beings. We cannot agree to these requests, which fly in the face of the spirit and the letter of the principles underlying this institution - that is, fundamental human rights.

By discouraging impulses towards revenge and in anticipation of justice that will be clear to everyone and that is supported by the international community, our Government has been able to contain a situation marked - understandably after such tragedy - by tensions and rancour. Contrary to disparaging allegations that are completely unfounded, our Government is not showing weakness; it is not just sitting on its hands whenever there is an infraction of the law.

Our Government continues to cooperate closely with the United Nations Force, and to facilitate its work. With scanty means, our Government has undertaken to rebuild a country that has been socially splintered and morally and physically ravaged. The humanitarian task of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) continues to be an indispensable asset in our efforts at rehabilitation.

This unspeakable barbarism, this genocide was carried out before the very eyes of the international community. We are grateful to those countries that generously put their troops at the disposal of UNAMIR,

as well as to the African contingents of the Group of neutral military observers. We would express our sincere thanks to them for the spirit in which they made their contribution. Rather than presiding over peace and harmony among the Rwandese, the troops, misled by the authors of the apocalypse - the Rwandese authorities at the time - were, alas, forced to serve as witnesses to the carnage. We regret that their mandate prevented them from acting effectively at the moment of the tragedy. Based on this experience, we encourage the United Nations to furnish the international tribunal to be created in Rwanda with the means to function as it should, in order to spare us further disappointments and tragedies.

In accordance with Rwanda's request, and following Mr. Degnisegui's report, as well as that of the Commission of Experts established by Security Council resolution 935 (1994), of 1 July 1994, it is absolutely urgent that this international tribunal be established. It will enable us to prosecute in a completely open setting those responsible for the genocide. Since most of the criminals have found refuge in various corners of the world, what we seek is a tool of justice that knows no borders. Moreover, the very nature of the events - considered to be crimes against humanity - warrants the international community's joining forces to prevent their reoccurrence.

That is why we continue to urge the adoption of a Security Council resolution that would facilitate the arrest and trial of those responsible for the genocide who are now in refugee camps outside our borders. We would remind the Assembly that most of these camps are primarily military camps where troops and militia, still in possession of heavy and light weapons, hold hundreds of thousands of persons hostage. This resolution should be based on Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and should include a request to, an authorization for, States Members of the United Nations to detain individuals on their territory who are suspected, on solid grounds, of having participated in acts of genocide.

The construction of a new society based on social justice and respect for fundamental human rights will be possible only if those responsible for the Rwandese tragedy are prosecuted. It is now six months since the first crimes were committed, and action must be initiated. The delay in starting trials causes understandable frustration on the part of victims who are already losing hope that there can be a just society and who tend to view the relative impunity of the criminals as indicating approval of their crimes.

Another thorny problem which faces our country and upon which we would like to shed some light is that of refugees.

The Rwandese refugees can be classified into two categories: the former refugees to whom the dictatorial power had refused to grant the right to return to their homeland, and the more recent ones who fled Rwanda following the events to which I have already referred. It is our Government's policy to encourage all refugees, without distinction, to return to their country.

In this respect, we are addressing countless appeals to our citizens outside our borders to rejoin us and help us build a new Rwanda. Thousands of them have already returned to their homeland, but many others remain abroad. We are also calling upon the soldiers to come back and, if they still desire to do so - to continue their careers in the Rwandese army. For Rwanda is their country; it belongs equally, and unquestionably, to all of its daughters and all its sons, with its potential, its limitations and its history, including this most recent tragedy which we must all bear.

Our Government has made the choice to act with transparency. The unrestricted deployment of UNAMIR as well as other human rights observers should reassure the world, and especially the refugees, of our Government's determination to respect the state of law.

We urge the United Nations to contribute to eliminating all the obstacles to the return of refugees, and especially to stop the violence in the camps against, in particular, those who wish to return home, and to break the stranglehold exercised by the former army's militia and other perpetrators of genocide on the rest of the people. This is why we beseech the international community to assist us in surmounting all the challenges entailed by the return of the refugees.

Concrete steps have been taken, but much remains to be done if the world is to be completely rid of these weapons which in the past caused serious tensions in various parts of the world that degenerated into armed conflicts.

Even though the relaxation of East-West tensions has contributed greatly to the resolution of certain conflicts, particularly in Indo-China, Latin America and the Middle East, elsewhere - in the former Yugoslavia and some African countries - the fires regrettably continue to burn.

Rwanda fully supports the international community's efforts to ensure compliance with commitments related to the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Our country is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we reiterate our full dedication to the international community's goals with regard to disarmament and arms control.

The attainment of these goals - eliminating the risk of war, limiting destruction in case of war, stopping war at an early stage, strengthening international security in order to ensure economic prosperity, channelling the funds freed as a result of disarmament towards the developing countries - will allow all nations to thrive.

Although genuine progress has been made in the area of disarmament, the new world order remains compromised by the constantly growing gap between the poorer and richer countries.

In the light of the two United Nations publications on the world economic and social situation for the years 1993 and 1994, current economic trends in the world point to gloomy forecasts in the short and medium term, particularly for many third-world countries.

The Rwandese delegation hopes that this forty-ninth session will reaffirm the importance and the still current validity of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries.

We solemnly invite the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly to address the fundamental right to development, as stated in the Vienna Declaration and adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, as well as the link between peace and development. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Rwanda and Africa as a whole look to the promise of the establishment of the United Nations agenda for development and of the speedy implementation of the amendments proposed to the plan of action - amendments which will undoubtedly enable us to restore the economies of our countries.

It is imperative for the United Nations - whose main objective remains the promotion of peace, security and development - to devote itself to activities in keeping with the attainment of peace, security and development.

In the fifty years since the signing of the San Francisco Charter, the world has undergone many changes. New Powers have arisen, the geopolitical map has shifted, Africa and other third-world countries have emancipated themselves, the cold war has ended - hence we must reassess our Organization to ensure that it can meet the new challenges.

It is in this context that Rwanda is concerned with the demands of the new world geopolitical situation, as well as with the new role assigned to the United Nations to contribute to the advent of the new world order.

In this connection, particular attention must be paid to the current restructuring of the United Nations system, particularly of the Security Council.

With regard to this very important organ of the United Nations system, the Rwandese delegation considers that membership, both permanent and non-permanent, should be expanded, with scrupulous attention to equitable geographic representation and bearing in mind the desire to maintain efficiency.

Similarly, the current restructuring of the United Nations system should allow small States to enjoy greater security and to be able to occupy a seat on the Security Council without difficulty.

One hopes that the new configuration of the Security Council will reflect the principle of equality among all Member States, and that this reform will respect the rules of democracy and transparency.

(spoke in English)

May I conclude by stating before the community of nations that members represent that the task we have set ourselves is enormous, but the will and determination of the Rwandese people to build a new society is unflinching.

To all those Rwandese who became victims of the machine of genocide and recent massacres, we share your deep wounds and reiterate our determination to bring the culprits to justice. To those Rwandese who were blindly manipulated to join the bankrupt politics of division and suppression, we call upon you to come back to your senses and join us in building a new society based on tolerance and reconciliation.

To the international community, I pledge our resolve to ensure that never again shall Rwanda be a terrain on which is sown politics of denial of basic human rights to any of its citizens. Its role in helping us to pick up the pieces of the completely shattered fabric of our society need not be emphasized. We share this moral duty, it being understood that the major part of the burden by far rests on the Rwandese people themselves.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Rwandese Republic for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, President of the Rwandese Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 *(continued)*

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar, His Excellency Mr. Jacques Sylla, on whom I now call.

Mr. Sylla (Madagascar) *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the delegation of Madagascar, may I congratulate you most sincerely, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. You assumption of this important post brings pride and hope to Africa, which sees this session as a special opportunity for drawing the international community's attention to the economic and social problems it has been facing in recent years.

My delegation assures you of its full cooperation and support, which we also offer to the other members of the Bureau. To them also I address my congratulations. I also wish to pay tribute to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, who so ably and in so masterly a fashion presided over the Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

In this new era in international relations the world faces two contradictory situations: one, unforgettable pictures of national reconciliation and faith in the future, the other, a vision of the horror of peoples and nations ripping each other apart, even to the extent of annihilating one another. The international community keeps on swinging back and forth between pride and dejection and between great hope and deep despair.

The actual progress made in ways of handling and settling certain disputes nevertheless strengthens our belief in the principles and covenants set forth in the Charter of our Organization. For example, we welcome the encouraging developments in Mozambique, which is now about to hold its first multiparty elections. Similarly, the negotiations in Lusaka between the Angolan Government and UNITA are beginning to bear fruit. Moreover, the clear efforts by those involved to smooth out the difficulties of applying the settlement plan in Western Sahara give us grounds for some optimism about the outcome of that dispute.

My delegation would also encourage those who are involved in the nuclear problem in the Korean peninsula to continue their talks with a view to arriving at a negotiated solution, which would help to promote stability and peace in the region.

With the same end in mind, Madagascar hopes there will be a peaceful settlement, on the basis of Security Council resolutions, of the problems between Kuwait and Iraq, with a view to establishing a mutually beneficial atmosphere of security and cooperation in the region.

The much-acclaimed return of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa to the community of nations is one of the major events of the last decade of this century and a subject of enormous pride for us all. Madagascar welcomes the establishment of a non-racial regime in that great country and firmly believes that reorganizing South Africa on a democratic basis opens up new prospects for cooperation and development throughout the region.

Thanks to the political courage of the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders, the Middle East has now begun a process of historic reconciliation that seemed impossible just a short time ago. The Malagasy Government is following closely the ups and downs of the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in Gaza and Jericho signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Agreement between Israel and Jordan on the Common Agenda. The United Nations should encourage all the parties to use the relevant resolutions with a view to establishing a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

With the disappearance of a world balance based on fear of a nuclear holocaust there came hope for a world free from the scourge of war and favourable to the

strengthening of international cooperation. Unfortunately, recent events in the international arena show that the new international order is indeed precarious.

Today we are seeing a reappearance of armed conflict in almost all parts of the world. Several countries are now plunged in fratricidal wars resulting in human tragedy and political chaos. Underlying these tragedies we see, inter alia, intolerance, xenophobia, the problem of minorities and, above all, the absence of democratic practices in the settlement of disputes. Somalia, Liberia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are tragic and dangerous situations which threaten not only the equilibrium of their regions but also international peace and security.

Other situations which are too often ignored could degenerate into serious crises. The problem of borders in central and eastern Europe, the disturbing situation in the Indian subcontinent and the flow of refugees in Africa, Asia and even in Europe are all situations that show how fragile international security is.

The efforts on the part of the United Nations to resolve regional and subregional disputes must be supported by greater world-wide cooperation in disarmament. In this connection my delegation attaches high priority to continuing initiatives and concerted actions by Member States to put a stop to the uncontrolled movement of arms and to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation hopes that the consensus at the last session on multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty will lead to the conclusion of a universal treaty so as to improve the prospects for the 1995 Conference of parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Broadening the activities of the United Nations in regard to peace-keeping and in regard to full achievement of the development goals calls for greater effectiveness in the United Nations machinery if the Organization is to live up to the expectations of the international community.

As for the role of the United Nations in the maintenance and restoration of peace, recent experience clearly shows the need for reform with a view to strengthening the United Nations capacity to prevent breaches of the peace on the one hand, and on the other hand to carry out peace-keeping operations on the ground.

Lessons can be learned from the difficulties encountered in Somalia, the tragedy of Rwanda, and the sorry experience of the former Yugoslavia. Those United Nations missions that were to some extent successful benefitted from the following factors: broad support from the international community; the consent of the parties to the dispute; and non-violent and impartial intervention forces. A peace-keeping operation *per se* should be accompanied by diplomatic efforts and economic and social assistance and should also tackle the underlying causes of the conflict. In any event, preventive diplomacy is the best means of averting the eruption of potential conflicts.

The use of regional machinery for the settlement of disputes would improve the conduct of peace-keeping operations and would, for example, avoid delay in mobilizing humanitarian assistance. After all, who is better placed than the States of a region to react to a potential threat there, particularly if the region already has an adequate structure for the prevention of conflicts? Examples of this are the system of collective security in Europe and the mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of disputes in Africa. Yet this Organization should not just unload its problems on to regional mechanisms; rather, it should offert h o s e mechanisms the necessary support by providing a clear and precise mandate and by making adequate financial and logistic resources available.

Never before have circumstances been so favourable for realizing the aspiration of the majority of Members of this Organization to an enlarged Security Council that provides equitable representation. Many proposals concerning this topic are now being discussed by the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group.

Madagascar, which, as is demonstrated by its Constitution, is deeply committed to democratic principles, believes that the democracy that is advocated in many countries should apply in the international system too. Madagascar is open to any proposal that would not damage the effectiveness of the Security Council. At the same time, we emphasize the need for democratic representation reflecting contemporary realities.

The Government of Madagascar does not underestimate the special responsibility of States that are permanent members of the Security Council, especially in the area of contributions to peace-keeping operations. However, any reform that is undertaken should win the

support of all Member States so that they will have the necessary trust in it and be able to participate effectively and on an equal footing.

The same principles apply to development problems, in that political stability at the national, regional and international levels determines whether development objectives can be met. There can be no peace without development, as can be seen in various parts of the world where serious conflicts and political troubles have been caused by economic hardship. Against this backdrop, the imperative of the universality of peace and development forcefully tells us to take note of how the world economic situation is developing.

The crisis that has affected the world economy for more than a decade is worsening, despite a slow and fragile recovery in some developed countries. This crisis continues to make a negative impact on the development process in third-world countries: erratic fluctuations in rates of exchange, an increase in interest rates and an unprecedented deterioration in the terms of trade - to mention only the most notable effects of the past year.

The gap between North and South grows wider while the inequalities between the regions become increasingly striking. Poverty and extreme poverty are daily being ingrained in the countries that are now referred to as the fourth world. The situation in Africa has become alarming. The crisis there is magnified by the negative effects of natural disasters and civil and ethnic wars.

Problems such as the crushing weight of external debt, stagnation, if not a reduction, in official development assistance, financial and trade restraints and a continuing drop in commodity prices are - today as yesterday - symptoms of a crisis in development.

Alongside this crisis, a serious change is taking place at the cost of developing countries, particularly poor countries. In the present restructuring of the world economy the interdependence that is preached has contradictory effects. While the countries of the North enjoy protectionism in all its forms in their markets, liberalism is becoming a requirement for developing countries. Equally, there is talk of the interdependence of problems but sectoral approaches alone are still used.

Economies in the industrialized countries are becoming increasingly integrated, while we note increasing marginalization of the economies of the poor countries. While the industrialized countries increase their independence in raw materials through the development of micro-electronics, the developing countries are suffering the backlash, and their already-fragile economic position is being weakened further. These are new challenges that we have to take up in the international arena.

Faced with these paradoxes and contradictions, which keep us deadlocked, and with economic stagnation in third-world countries, we have to ask how we can get out of this situation. It is clear that only by combining our efforts at all levels - national, regional and international - shall we be able to produce a lasting solution.

As to the national level, I should like to cite the case of my own country. The Government of Madagascar has made development the principal objective underlying its activities at the national and international levels. Thus diplomacy is put at the service of development and, without any ideological considerations, is focused on the establishment of relations with all States on the basis of respect for the great fundamental principles set forth in the various international legal instruments.

While continuing to implement its structural-adjustment programme, Madagascar has made important political changes in the shape of democratization, characterized by the blossoming of a multi-party approach and the creation of the conditions necessary to the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In short, we are working towards the advent of a state of law that responds to the deeply felt aspirations of our people.

This democratization of our political life is accompanied by economic reform based on liberalism designed to promote active participation by our people in the development of the country. In this context, our Government is trying to create a climate of trust in our institutional framework, and we are trying to draw up clear rules for production and investment in order to guarantee the necessary political support at the national and international levels.

The Government of Madagascar would like to thank the friendly countries and international institutions that have understood the importance of the changes now under way and that intend to support them and to increase their contributions to satisfy our most immediate and urgent needs and, in the long term, help to

strengthen our democratic process and promote real, self-sustaining development.

When we use the term "immediate needs", we are thinking of a set of relief mechanisms designed to deal with the precarious situation of our principal social sectors because of the demands of the structural adjustment programme.

As for the economic recovery and development programme, I should like to repeat that the Government of the Republic of Madagascar is prepared to conclude agreements with the Bretton Woods institutions. It is our ardent hope that, above and beyond their current demands for adjustments to achieve financial equilibrium and balanced budgets, those institutions will take new measures to reorient that programme towards true recovery accompanied by an economic take-off and sustainable development.

At the regional level, developing countries have come up with guidelines and goals and have now buckled down to implementing them. In the case of Africa, I would recall the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act, the African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Four years after the launching of the new Programme of Action, we have to say that the expected results have not yet been achieved and that Africa, one of the world's least-developed continents, has not received the hoped for assistance and aid from the rich countries. Because of their own efforts to implement measures for rehabilitation and recovery, often involving considerable sacrifices, the African countries deserve a more positive response from the international community.

It is crucial to settle problems of debt, commodity diversification and the provision of adequate financial resources if African States are to be assured not only the conditions required for true economic and social take-off, but also the success of the structural and political reforms now under way, free from social upheaval and the danger of a decline in security and stability.

The United Nations has an important role to play in finding appropriate solutions to development problems. The persistent nature of the problems we customarily evoke here in the Assembly every year shows once again the inadequacy of the policies and measures adopted so far - despite the adoption of several international instruments for cooperation, such as the Declaration of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the Cartegena Commitment of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21.

The problems we are facing can no longer be dealt with adequately on an ad hoc basis or constantly subjected to adjustment measures. What is required is structural reform of the international economic system, which, despite profound changes, is still unjust and perpetuates relations of dependency. In other words, it is very important to define new strategies and agree on new parameters and mechanisms that can reverse the inequities in international economic relations today.

This is a task for the United Nations, which, because of its universality and its democratic principles, remains the only forum that can tackle these problems with an integrated approach, taking into account the political implications of decisions made by those principally involved in development, including financial, monetary and international trade institutions.

The Agenda for Development, the indispensable corollary to the Agenda for Peace, launched two years ago by the Secretary-General, should give the international community new guidelines as it seeks to attain development objectives. The elaboration of that Agenda should be given special attention.

The Agenda's first objectives should be to eliminate poverty, meet peoples' basic needs and improve their standard of living. It should seek to promote effective implementation of existing commitments and agreements and take into account the goals of forthcoming international conferences in the field of economic and social development. Instead of talking about requirements or conditions, it should set forth practical and realistic ways of meeting the challenges with which we are faced.

In this connection, the attention of the international community should be focused on questions of debt, development financing, commodities, international trade, environment and development.

Support for economic and technical cooperation between developing countries and the strengthening of regional and sub-regional integration initiatives should be an integral part of the new Agenda.

Experience has shown that the resumption of development through renewed international cooperation cannot succeed without the political will of States, especially the rich ones. Although such cooperation depends on many variables, and is affected by many different circumstances, it can no longer disregard the principles of justice, equity and equal but differentiated participation.

At this crucial moment in its history, the Organization must learn from the past so that it can consolidate its achievements, meet today's challenges and develop a plan for the future of the United Nations.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will be the time for drawing up a balance sheet, for making the Organization, the Member States and the people of the world face up to their respective responsibilities. This historic moment will make clear the gap between hopes and reality, between commitments fulfilled and promises forgotten.

Efforts to restructure the Organization and give it a second wind will be successful only if there is a true resolve to arrive at a world consensus for development, in all its aspects, as the foundation of peace and a source of hope for all mankind.

For its part, Madagascar is prepared to work with peace-loving and justice-loving States to build a better world.

Address by Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia. I invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Drnovsek (Slovenia): Please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and Côte d'Ivoire on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Our deliberations under your presidency are certain to be a success. May I also take this occasion to thank His Excellency Ambassador Samuel Insanally, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Guyana, for his many contributions as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

The economic and political changes currently under way have raised the hopes of all of us for a better future. Democracy has been restored to much of the world, thus not only showing that it is the most suitable model of government, but also making possible a greater degree of international cooperation, strengthening the rule of international law and giving the United Nations a more powerful role.

In Eastern Europe, the process of democratic change is now irreversible. Though much is made of the dangers of new ethnic conflicts and the rise of new ultra-nationalistic and totalitarian forces, they become ever less likely to succeed with each day that passes. Have we not seen two of the most apparently intractable problems - the Middle East and South Africa - brought to a peaceful conclusion? The Middle East was a crucible of conflict; apartheid in South Africa was a disgrace to the entire human race. Mr. de Klerk and Mr. Mandela showed both political wisdom and human tolerance in agreeing on a transition for the Republic of South Africa. South Africa will play a major role in future developments in the African continent.

Those are just some causes for optimism. But optimism does not mean expecting that all our crises will simply resolve themselves without any action on our part. If our collective hopes and desires are to lead anywhere, then the work must begin here at the United Nations, where representatives from the entire world are gathered. The time has come when we can make this world a better place to live.

Never in the history of the world has the awareness of the global nature of the basic issues been as strong as it is today. Never has the desire for cooperation between nations so clearly superseded the wish for the domination of one nation by another. And never has man had so much knowledge and technology at his fingertips as he has today. All of these factors are predispositions for a greater role for the United Nations, and we must do everything to ensure that the mechanisms of the United Nations work more effectively.

We support the efforts for the reconstruction of the Security Council. The Security Council ought to enhance both its effectiveness and its efficiency, as well as its representational capacity. A measured, realistic expansion of the composition of the Council would be appropriate. Furthermore, Slovenia supports the proposal that Germany and Japan become permanent members of the Council.

An additional task in this regard relates to the need to enhance the transparency of the work of the Security Council. The system of consultations should be developed further, so as to provide an adequate opportunity for the participation of United Nations Member States interested in various situations dealt with by the Security Council.

The General Assembly could also make a greater contribution to the development of adequate approaches on the part of the Security Council, as well as to less costly and more effective methods of preventive diplomacy, and at the same time decrease the need for the Security Council to intervene in armed conflicts.

Furthermore, in recent years the General Assembly has taken an important step in this direction through the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Last, but not least, it is important to do as much as possible to strengthen the United Nations financially, even though the finance ministers in each and every Member country find that their contributions to the United Nations are a significant component of their State budget. Slovenia is committed to the principle that contributions to the United Nations must be paid in full and on time. The regular payment of contributions is an essential part of all efforts aimed at the financial reform of the United Nations.

The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the recent Conference on Population and Development have brought this Organization into the public consciousness in a new way; they have shown that we are conscious of some of the most fundamental problems that face all of us, not just Governments, but the people. Though some may be sceptical about the results of these Conferences, my feeling is that they have contributed significantly towards a global consensus and have involved a whole new constituency in our work.

The maintenance of international peace and security is enshrined in the United Nations Charter as the main purpose of the Organization. I believe that one of the most important questions to be dealt with is dealing with the provision of armed forces acting within the framework of United Nations operations. The variety and complexity of United Nations military and related activities have developed far beyond what was once defined as "peace-keeping". Careful reflection is needed on future directions to be taken. Slovenia welcomes the Secretary-General's current efforts to develop a system of stand-by forces and is ready to participate in these efforts.

The maintenance of international peace and security must be strengthened by effective measures in the field of disarmament. Slovenia is, like most other States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, convinced of the need for indefinite extension of that Treaty. Furthermore we are convinced of the need for enhanced security guarantees, in particular negative security guarantees. We also support the efforts to achieve a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing and other disarmament measures with respect to weapons of mass destruction. With respect to conventional weapons, we support the United States initiative for the conclusion of an agreement to reduce the number and availability of anti-personnel land-mines. In short, the issues of disarmament ought to remain high among the priorities of the United Nations agenda.

The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is another of the highest priorities of the United Nations For the Republic of Slovenia, it represents both a basic domestic task and a strong international commitment. Slovenia actively participated in the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, and in the subsequent efforts leading to the appointment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. By the same token, we support the efforts for further development of the United Nations system in the field of human rights. We are ready to contribute to the work of the Working Group of the Third Committee in its search for the appropriate methods of protection of human rights. Here again we believe that prevention is better than cure, and that appropriate international action is necessary in order to prevent situations characterized by violations of human rights.

The United Nations is confronted with a variety of situations involving the use of force. The armed conflicts in the Balkans are among the most difficult situations. Slovenia is the only successor State of the now-disintegrated former Yugoslavia which is not directly threatened by the ongoing conflict in that region. None the less, Slovenia remains vitally interested in the stability of the Balkans. The horrors of war against

ordinary citizens, mass violations of human rights and breaches of the United Nations Charter, first in the Republic of Croatia and now in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, cause serious concern to the entire international community.

I will not be telling Members anything new when I say that the international community was not prepared for the eruption of the crisis that occurred within the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, the conflict that was subsequently to occur within Bosnia and Herzegovina has seriously damaged the image and credibility of the United Nations. It is true that without the involvement of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), working in conjunction with many humanitarian organizations, the tragedy in Bosnia would have been even worse. But humanitarian assistance alone cannot be considered as a substitute for effective policy.

Such achievements as the Washington Agreement, concluded between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats, do at least raise some hope that appropriate international assistance can meaningfully influence the political aspects of the conflict. Nevertheless, the continuation of the militant behaviour by the Bosnian Serbs maintains the need for the option of lifting of the arms embargo against the legitimate Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to remain on the agenda. This war, with all its consequences, is threatening to continue into a third winter, and I am afraid that this certainly most risky and negative of options will be the only one left if the international community does not prove able to bring about an end to hostilities and open the way towards a viable peace with the necessary elements of justice.

I would like to end this sad chapter of my address with a warning. We should by no means forget that the terrifying pattern of "ethnic cleansing" has been patented in the conflicts that have occurred across the territories of several successor States of the former Yugoslavia. Regardless of the final outcome of these conflicts in the Balkans, we must seriously consider all the means and methods at our disposal that may prevent a repetition of this pattern of events occurring in other parts of the world.

I speak for a country which has the good fortune not to be a problem, but a country which seeks solutions. In the less than two years in which our independence was internationally recognized, we have, under difficult circumstances, achieved positive economic growth. We have managed to maintain a high level of social security and stability. The transformation and reform of our economy has gone hand-in-hand with the rapid growth of our democratic institutions. We are paying special attention to the protection of human rights and of our ethnic minorities. Slovenia is a member of the Council of Europe; we have signed the Partnership for Peace and the Pact of Stability; Slovenia is a factor of stability in Europe and strives to be an active part of Europe's integration.

I do not wish to imply that there are no obstacles to the progress of that integration. Europe may have high levels of prosperity and deeply rooted democracies and it may be one of the most stable regions in the world, but the ghosts of the past and leanings towards near-forgotten forms of nationalistic chauvinism are still with us. These are in direct contradiction to the very idea of a cooperative and multicultural Europe; they endanger the processes of integration. Unexplained and unjustifiable impediments have already been raised against Slovenia's association with the European Union.

In closing, allow me to express Slovenia's great satisfaction that our proposal that the moral and ethical aspects of social developments be considered at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen next year has been widely accepted. We are particularly glad that Slovenia will have the honour to host the United Nations seminar on the ethical and spiritual dimensions of social progress and development, an event to which we attach great importance. If one thing is certain, it is that economic, scientific and technological views on development do not exist in a vacuum. The United Nations Charter calls for the fostering of the prosperity, harmony and freedom of people both as individuals and as cultural entities. This ultimate objective should be borne in mind in all the United Nations endeavours.

It is my hope that under your leadership, the Assembly will take positive steps in that direction.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, His Excellency Mr. Jaime Marchan.

Mr. Marchán (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I would like to congratulate Mr Amara Essy, Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire on his election as President of this important Assembly.

I should also like to extend to Ambassador Samuel Insanally the congratulations of Ecuador on his brilliant performance during the last session.

Equally, on behalf of the Government of Ecuador, I should like to extend our congratulations to the Secretary General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his work in carrying out his important duties.

During these last few years, the world of international relations has undergone a swift and profound transformation. Several problems which divided nations have disappeared, while others have emerged, as have forces and elements whose existence invites careful reflection. The most serious ideological differences have been overcome and we have witnessed with satisfaction the holding of free elections in South Africa; however, in other parts of the world, other evils have reappeared - racism, xenophobia, civil wars - and problems such as hunger and poverty have become more acute. Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Rwanda are just some of the names which now move mankind's moral conscience.

At the same time, the historic role of the United Nations has acquired a unique and far-reaching meaning, and the near future of the planet appears linked to the directives and decisions adopted in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

The fact that the United Nations is about to celebrate 50 years of existence is truly pleasing, because it means that this forum of mankind has consolidated its leading role in history. At the same time, this anniversary leads us to reflect on ways to improve the Organization. This process will inevitably involve reconsidering some United Nations structures in order to adapt them to the new demands of development which will be discussed at the social summit soon to take place in Copenhagen. The social summit must enable nations, taking account of the many decades during which trade and financial matters have played against less developed countries, to commit themselves to more direct action to face the problems of inadequate education, illness, violence and poverty.

The United Nations is approaching its fiftieth year at a time when building a new international order has become imperative. Ecuador wants this new international order to be marked by unconditional respect for the principles of the Organization's Charter, by the international economic restructuring which for many years has been one of the main aspirations of the developing world, and by effective and continuing solidarity and interdependence among all the nations on our planet.

The changes on the international scene have brought about a new and growing interest in the United Nations. The international community turns to the Organization more often and with more confidence when it needs help in solving its problems. The Organization's structures must be revised and strengthened so that its responses can meet the needs that have been put to it.

To carry out this endeavour, it will be necessary to address statements that have been made regarding the new composition of the Security Council and to consider the need to revitalize the General Assembly, giving it functions and responsibilities in keeping with its status as the highest forum of the Organization. An international order based on and designed for the human person must have at its disposal an adequate tool for carrying out programmes needed for the economic and social development of our peoples. From that point of view, it is imperative for us to undertake a process of strengthening the Economic and Social Council. Furthermore, we have to create conditions that will provide the indispensable motivation for States, given the new circumstance of the world, to place their full trust in the International Court of Justice.

Ecuador, a country that has the deepest respect for fundamental human rights, appreciates and assumes with the utmost responsibility the trust of the international community, granted through this Organization, enabling it to contribute to the work of the most important forums devoted to the promotion and protection of all human rights.

The Government of Ecuador echoes the expressions of support to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It trusts that his difficult task will be based on the frank understanding of the international community. It also expresses its conviction that the Assembly will commit the necessary administrative and financial resources to facilitate the duties of the High Commissioner.

Human rights and social development are inseparable, indivisible. In daily reality we cannot separate respect for human rights from fair economic

relations. As stated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), quality of life is a subject which cannot remain at the entire mercy of the game of macroeconomic statistics.

We developing countries are affected in our foreign trade by the gradual deterioration of the terms of exchange, a phenomenon which generates serious social consequences and which forces us to export greater volumes of raw, finished and semi-manufactured goods. We also face non-tariff barriers, and many other measures that block access by our products - such as bananas and flowers in the case of Ecuador - to the markets of those very developed countries where the principle of free trade is designed and developed. This protectionist policy contradicts the goals of general welfare sought by the international community.

The countries of Latin America, including Ecuador, have launched a great effort of adjustment and economic restructuring which must be properly understood and which offers a framework more conducive to international cooperation and to foreign investment.

At this stage of history, neither the developed nor the developing countries can neglect the so-called social question, a product of the socio-economic inequities that dominate the world. The solution to this problem can be achieved only by international cooperation at all levels. The development of poor nations must depend on their own efforts, on cooperation based on smooth, effective and profoundly human mechanisms of integration.

We believe in the fundamental right to life. Therefore, we cannot and will not accept the implementation of programmes conditioned on population control and abortion, which are what Pope John Paul II has called "the culture of death". These are the bases that should inspire solidarity and international cooperation.

Environmental problems, and those linked to the dangerous use of nuclear weapons, have shown that we humans are all voyaging in the same boat and that our destinies are intertwined. Thus, the prosperity of some cannot result from the exploitation or damage of the environment of others; the accumulation of weapons in one country is nothing but a boomerang that country is throwing at itself.

I want to recall the words of the Constitutional President of Ecuador, Mr. Sixto Durán Ballén, in this august forum, when he said:

> "I must emphasize that although the developed countries, which are mainly responsible for the deterioration of the environment, have a particular obligation, it is other countries that are being asked to make the sacrifice of restricting the exercise of their legitimate right to use the wealth that nature has given them. It is necessary to seek due compensation jointly, especially in the shape of financial aid and technological cooperation". *(A/47/PV.12, p. 18)*

Inevitably, all our peoples must join forces to safeguard and restore the environment. In the ecological field, we have completed the stage of formulating rules and international conventions. Now we must join our resources and technical efforts to put those solutions into practice as soon as possible. That is why it is important to develop greater linkage between institutions such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the one hand, and programmes of the United Nations and the Global Environment Facility on the other. Therefore, genuine transfer of clean technologies is of great importance.

It is especially worrisome that nuclear testing for military purposes continues to be carried out. Ecuador condemns these tests, which damage the environment, endanger the countries of the test area and ignore the right of all the peoples to peace and security. Furthermore, Ecuador is worried by the fact that in the post-cold-war era some countries have attracted significant numbers of technicians and nuclear scientists in order to develop their military power. Resolution 48/70, approved last December, opens the way towards a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, which all States should support.

We believe in the need not only to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but also to improve it and establish it forever. At the same time, we support the declaration of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, similar to those established by the Latin American Treaty.

In this regard, it is a matter of serious concern that, while we are trying to limit and even eliminate nuclear arsenals, there has been an increase in the manufacture of conventional weapons and in the traffic in them. Accordingly, there is an imperative need, as the Holy See proposed through its Council for Justice and Peace, for the creation of an international authority to reduce the

trade in weapons and to achieve the goal of a comprehensive ban on all kinds of weapons.

Ecuador welcomes most warmly the agreements arrived at and the progress made in the Middle East in the process of establishing peace and normalizing the relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Ecuador firmly supports this process, which is an example for the solution of other, perhaps less complex, problems. We also condemn the actions of extremist groups who, through terrorism, attempt to prevent the consolidation of peace in that important part of the world.

We were particularly enthusiastic over the reinstatement of South Africa in this world Organization. With the victory over apartheid one of the United Nations longest and most difficult struggles has now come to an end.

We must however reiterate our profound concern over the ongoing ethnic and religious clashes in the territories of the former Yugoslavia. Ecuador supports the actions taken by the international community in seeking a political solution that would ensure an end to the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

And now my country would like to issue a plea to the international community to provide generous humanitarian assistance for the victims in Rwanda.

Recently, there has been a proliferation of United Nations peace-keeping operations. Notwithstanding all its shortcomings, the international effort in this regard is praiseworthy, but we believe this Organization should, basically, use preventive measures to deal with the underlying causes of civil, international and inter-ethnic conflicts, and along with this, it should also address the problems of injustice, inequality in economic and trade relations, and the persistence of prejudice and age-old enmity. The road to peace lies through programmes to provide help in practical and urgent terms, to those countries most affected by hunger and extreme poverty. There must be a prompt review of programmes of cooperation. There must be a more fruitful effort on the part of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to develop a true culture of peace and respect for the rights of others.

The fundamental obligation of the United Nations - one might even say its real raison d'être - is not only the maintenance of international peace and security but also the raising of the economic, social and cultural standards of peoples. This is the only solid basis for progress and development.

I believe it is time for this Assembly to adopt pragmatic resolutions so that we may spend less on paper and bureaucracy and more on technical and cultural missions and specific programmes that would reach those people that face the greatest problems, areas afflicted by war, plague and starvation.

Ecuador has advocated a solution to the complex Haitian crisis that takes account of the principles of non-intervention and the peaceful settlement of disputes and that involves the participation of all sectors of Haitian society, with the broadest respect for human rights and taking account of the relevant resolutions of the Organization of American States and of the United Nations.

Ecuador trusts that democracy will be established permanently and as soon as possible in Haiti. To that end, it is offering all the diplomatic and political support that it can. At the same time, we would wish to participate in the humanitarian efforts to contribute to the rebuilding of the Haitian economy, once constitutional order is restored.

Ecuador would also be in favour of continuing the Cuban-American dialogue in that same constructive spirit and with good will. We fervently hope that our sister nation of Cuba may be able to become fully involved again in hemispheric cooperation. It will be necessary to make great strides along the road to broadening and strengthening democracy and pluralism, and at the same time an end must be put to the unilateral blockade to which Cuba has been subjected for many years.

In keeping with our constant desire to contribute to a climate of peace, understanding and cooperation among peoples, Ecuador has been seeking some means of dealing with its age-old controversy with Peru and strengthening its ties of friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Ecuador and Peru. As we said earlier, Ecuador attaches very special importance, within this process, to the intervention of His Holiness the Pope, in seeking a definitive solution to this problem. This is in view of the high moral authority of His Holiness, which is recognized by both our peoples.

It is increasingly clear to our two nations that the way to development is to be found in working together in harmony.

We wish to deepen and broaden our far-reaching common interests. This is to the mutual benefit of our two countries and would enable us to become efficient partners as we develop together.

All the nations represented in this Assembly are called upon to build a better world, a world free from the horrors of war, hunger and environmental destruction. May we, through our work, respond to this historic challenge.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia, His Excellency Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab.

Mr. Gurirab *(Namibia):* On behalf of the Namibian delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. As a distinguished diplomat and public servant with long experience, you bring to your office an outstanding record of wisdom, excellence and industry. Côte d'Ivoire and Namibia have maintained close relations of friendship and cooperation. On a personal note, I take great pride in your brilliant election and extend best wishes to you.

During his term of office, your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, introduced practical steps aimed at enhancing the work of the General Assembly and promoting further our common endeavours towards peace, partnership, development and prosperity. We commend him for all this.

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, our illustrious Secretary-General, has always kept his plate full in the service of our Organization and its Charter. He has also, on a continuous basis, kept intensifying his tireless efforts in furtherance of world peace and security and, not least, development and regional conflict management and resolution. The Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Development" is an important and timely complement to "An Agenda for Peace". Together they reinforce General Assembly resolution 48/165 on the "Renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership". I can assure the Secretary-General that he can count on Namibia's support in the discharge of his mandate.

Following our independence, the Government and the people of Namibia strongly felt that the decolonization of our country was not complete because parts of our national territory still remained under colonial occupation. In 1991, from this rostrum, I called on the international community and, particularly, the permanent members of the Security Council to live up to their commitment, collectively and severally, by ensuring the early reintegration of Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands into Namibia, in accordance with Security Council resolution 432 (1978). Since then, I have kept the international community abreast of the negotiations to this end between the Governments of Namibia and South Africa. In 1992, I reported on the establishment of the Joint Administrative Authority, and last year I announced the agreed date for the reintegration.

It is with pride and satisfaction that I am now finally informing the General Assembly and the world community as a whole that, on 1 March 1994, Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands were reintegrated into Namibia. Security Council Resolution 432 (1978) has thus been fully implemented. On that emotional but indeed solemn occasion marking the second independence of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia, proudly declared that at last Walvis Bay and the Offshore Islands were forever liberated and reintegrated into Namibia and he thanked the people of South Africa for their role in making this possible. A huge and tumultuous crowd of Namibians and friends from abroad who were gathered there confirmed this truth with their loud cheers. In the end, diplomacy has triumphed over confrontation.

I would like to place on record Namibia's gratitude to the Secretary-General, as well as the Secretaries-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth, the member States of the South African Development Community (SADC) and the front-line States, as well as many other good friends who rendered support and encouragement to Namibia in the negotiating process.

At this point let me reiterate what I said then, that a successful resolution of this issue will not only consolidate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country but will also create enormous opportunity for economic integration, community-building and prosperity for the SADC region. New vistas for trade, transport and communication would be opened up throughout southern Africa. And this will further stimulate free movement of goods, services and people in the area. Walvis Bay will greatly complement other ports in the region.

It is a truism that peace, democracy, political stability and good governance are among the basic pillars

for development. The southern African region presents a good example of transformation from war, conflicts, economic destabilization, political instability, social disintegration, suppression and denial of human rights to the new situation of peace, democracy, stability, regional cooperation and hope for a more prosperous future for us all. The former Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) vigorously sought to counteract the destabilization and subversion of the countries of the region by the apartheid regime of South Africa. The front-line States, with vigour and determination, also pursued the fight for liberation, peace, political stability, democratization and promotion and protection of human rights. Now, with the eradication of apartheid in South Africa and the installation of the first democratically elected Government, the struggle for freedom and political emancipation in southern Africa was crowned with a gigantic victory.

The people of South Africa finally triumphed over the apartheid system. The epoch making inauguration of President Nelson Mandela, on 10 May 1994, was a victory for humanity and a vindication of the untold sacrifices of the South African people. The international community, and in particular the countries and the peoples of southern Africa, celebrated this joyous event, confident in the conviction that peace had finally come to our region. We in Namibia are particularly gratified to welcome the new South Africa into the fold of the community of nations. Just as we struggled together during the apartheid era, we look forward to strengthened partnership for development and prosperity for our people and the region.

The time for reconstruction and economic cooperation in the region has finally dawned. We are convinced that the transformation in 1992 of the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) will further consolidate regional economic cooperation and all-round development for the prosperity of all our people.

This will indeed serve as a formidable building-block towards the realization of the goals of the African Economic Community, especially in the field of inter-Africa trade, investment, capacity-building and human resource development. In this context, Namibia welcomes with appreciation President Clinton's announcement yesterday in Washington that the United States Government will make a substantial financial contribution to reconstruction and development in South Africa, as well as in other countries in the region. It is good news for us that a friend of Africa, Ambassador Andrew Young, will coordinate this programme.

Let me mention here the recent first-ever meeting between Foreign Ministers of the European Union and SADC held last month in Berlin. The meeting was historic and elevated the interaction and cooperative relations between the two regions to a higher political and economic level.

The past four years have seen throughout Africa a process of free and fair elections, multi-party democracy, the protection of human rights, press freedom, the rule of law, and market-oriented economies. This process has taken a firm direction and produced positive results in southern Africa and in other parts of Africa. In 1989, successful independence elections were held which culminated in a free and independent Namibia in 1990. In 1991, democratic elections were held in Zambia; in 1992 free and fair elections were held in Angola, though regrettably UNITA refused to accept the results and restarted the fighting; Lesotho held multi-party democratic elections in 1993; and this year, South Africa and Malawi underwent democratic transformations. In October, Botswana and Mozambique will hold democratic elections. Multi-party democratic, presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled in Namibia in December this year. Likewise, 1995 will see multi-party democratic elections in Tanzania and general elections in Zimbabwe. This would mean that the vision for deepening democratization, peace, prosperity and true partnership in SADC will be greatly boosted.

In the emerging world order resulting from the end of the cold war and the victories scored by the forces of liberation, the front-line States decided that the time had come to transform themselves into a mechanism for political consultations, conflict resolution, peace and security in the SADC region. The new body which is now being put together is intended to augment the Organization of African Unity (OAU) mechanism for conflict resolution and peace-keeping, and will serve primarily as the political and security arm of SADC itself. The countries of SADC, through this mechanism, are committed to defend and protect constitutional order and the rule of law. Through their common vision for peace and development, a task force of three Heads of State recently succeeded in peacefully redressing the attempted overthrow of the democratically elected Government of Lesotho. It was a first major test, and the SADC leaders rose to the occasion and defused what

was potentially an explosive situation with serious consequences for the whole region.

Africa needs to produce similar success stories, through concerted regional initiatives, in other conflict situations such as Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Somalia, the Sudan and others. Naturally, we welcome the serious efforts which are being made by neighbouring African States in and relating to each one of these trouble spots. To this end, Africa and the international community alike should heed the appeals for contributions to the OAU Peace Fund. In Namibia, we believe that once given adequate financial and human resources Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the OAU Secretary-General, and his staff are capable of implementing expeditiously the relevant decisions of the succeeding summits of African leaders.

In Angola, it is our strong expectation that the protracted negotiations currently under way in Lusaka appear poised for an imminent and successful conclusion. The Government and the people of Namibia are indeed awaiting the successful resolution of this bloody conflict. In their own modest way, the Government and the people of Namibia will continue to play a constructive role to hasten this process. The statement made last week from this rostrum by the Foreign Minister of Angola demonstrated once again the flexibility and genuine goodwill of the Angolan Government to reach a peaceful settlement in the interest of the suffering Angolan people. UNITA, it is sad to say, continues to obstruct progress and wage war. It should be made to heed the urgent warnings of the Security Council. The United Nations should, in the meantime, keep itself in readiness to increase its personnel in Angola as soon as a cease-fire is restored. The ever-increasing peace-keeping missions of the United Nations need sound financial support, if indeed peace is to be achieved and preserved. I therefore urge the States Members of our Organization to heed the Secretary-General's call in his current report for adequate funding for peace-keeping operations.

Mr. Touré (Guinea-Bissau), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Namibia is very much encouraged by the recent conclusion of an agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba on immigration issues. It is our fervent hope that the signing of this agreement will serve as the beginning of serious negotiations to resolve all aspects of the long-standing dispute between them, in the interest of peace, trade, development and good neighbourliness. I made the same plea last year from here, and the latest development helps to keep my hope alive. Namibia enjoys excellent friendly and productive relations with both countries. It is in this spirit that we advocate *rapprochement* between them.

We consider that in both elections and governance popular participation is a prerequisite for development and prosperity. At independence, however, Namibia inherited a dual economy that was based on an unequal distribution of wealth and disparity of income resulting from apartheid. As a result, the majority of the population has incomes that are far below the national average. To redress these imbalances, the Government has been pursuing prudent economic policies aimed at improving the lives of the majority of our citizens. The direction is clear, although the road ahead is replete with pitfalls. However, I must say that the Government's will and determination to succeed cannot be doubted.

In 1991, Namibia sought least-developed-country status to redress imbalances in education, health, housing and employment. The granting by the General Assembly of the "as if" least-developed-country option to Namibia, if not the full status of least-developed country, nonetheless allowed us to lay the foundation for the reconstruction of our economic and social structures.

In spite of the Government's best efforts in these critical areas, imbalances persist in our society. Provisional figures from the ongoing 1993-1994 National Housing, Income and Expenditure Survey provide clear evidence of skewed income distribution. Using private household consumption as an indicator, preliminary survey estimates show that 50 per cent of the poorest households account for about 13 per cent of the total consumption. The richest 10 per cent of the households consume about 33 per cent.

The low literacy rate, the low level of manufacturing industry and the extremely skewed distribution of income are a result of institutionalized social inequality over long periods. These social and economic sequels of the old apartheid order continue to bedevil the Government's developmental efforts. In accordance with our current "as if" status, and with the assistance of the World Bank, the Namibian Government is at present preparing a public expenditure review. The findings so far point to dramatic income disparities, in spite of the efforts by the Government that I alluded to earlier.

It is in this context that Namibia wishes to appeal once again to the States Members of our Organization for an extension of the "as if" least-developed-country status for an additional number of years. This will be an enormous contribution to our determined efforts to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged Namibians. We thank those States and agencies that have implemented resolution 46/204, on "as if" least-developed-country status and appeal for their continued assistance, which will strengthen the foundation we have laid for development and further consolidate our democracy.

The United Nations is centrally placed to address the major global problems facing us. Its focus, however, should not be limited to the issues of peace and security. The other critical issues, reconstruction and development, must be given the same serious attention. The World Summit on Social Development, for example, must be a forum for us to renew our commitment and political will to effectively address the diverse social and economic problems. We must come away from Copenhagen to act; the international community this time will need to summon more courage in order to translate into action the bold decisions we shall take. There is a linkage between the Plan of Action and follow-up mechanisms adopted at the Cairo population Conference and the goals of the Copenhagen and the Beijing Conferences in 1995. This requires greater and systematic coordination, so as to ensure economy, efficiency and the achievement of goals we all share.

The continued marginalization and exclusion of women from many spheres of life are a challenge to us all. The platform for action to be adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing next year, must therefore assure the full and equal participation of women at all levels of society. Namibia's Constitution calls for affirmative action and enlightened policies to effect positive change in this area of human endeavour.

Namibia is an active member of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic and will continue to pursue the vigorous promotion of trade in the South Atlantic region, including the development of fisheries and marine resources as well as tourism on a sustainable basis. The South Atlantic region comprises a great expanse of waters, which the countries of the Zone are committed to keep nuclear-free. Similarly, African countries are about to sign a treaty for the denuclearization of the continent.

In recent weeks, important meetings of Ministers and officials of the African and Latin American countries have taken place in Punta del Este, Uruquay, and Brasilia, Brazil, to further advance dialogue and cooperation on issues of common interest. It was in this spirit of South-South cooperation that Namibia supported the establishment of the South Centre, towards whose operations we have already made a significant contribution.

I should now like to state Namibia's position on the overall reform of the United Nations, and in particular equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Namibia does not believe that the present decision- making machinery of the Security Council will effectively serve the international community in the twenty-first century. Change towards a more representative Council would enhance its legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness.

Representation on the Security Council must reflect the phenomenal numerical growth in the membership of the General Assembly. In line with the principle of geographical and equitable representation, Africa is entitled to an appropriate representation of no fewer than two permanent seats on the Security Council. For us, Security Council reform means more than merely adding two or more industrialized permanent members. What is required is democracy, transparency and fair play. Namibia reiterates its position that the veto power is outdated and undemocratic and should be abolished. Equally, the General Assembly should not be allowed to lose its authority, competence and relevance in the reform process. Rather, it too needs further strengthening in all aspects.

Namibia is of the strong view that the United Nations, and Africa in particular, should leave no stone unturned to ensure that the people of Western Sahara are not left to face their fate alone. The decolonization and political emancipation of Africa cannot be declared complete without self-determination for them as well, through a democratic referendum jointly supervised by the United Nations and the OAU.

With regard to the dispute between two of our esteemed friends, India and Pakistan, on the question of Jammu and Kashmir, Namibia urges them to pursue peaceful dialogue and promote bilateral negotiations without public confrontation.

On another issue, we are encouraged by Libya's acceptance of Security Council resolution 731 (1992) and its expressed willingness to resolve the Lockerbie crisis

with the three Western Powers. Dialogue and diplomacy should be placed on the front burner.

Next year the Non-Proliferation Treaty review and extension Conference will be held. Namibia is a signatory to the Treaty. It goes without saying that the Conference will provide a golden opportunity for review, assessment and extension of this vital Treaty, which has so far helped to prevent nuclear war. There is also a proposal by Zimbabwe, a proposal that we fully support, to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Other critical issues, such as general and complete disarmament, nuclear technology, nuclear-weapon-free zones and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, also need to be discussed and resolved. Once there is consensus on these and other related concerns, the extension of the Treaty, limited or unlimited, can be resolved to the satisfaction of both nuclear and non-nuclear States parties.

The peace process in the Middle East continues to gain momentum and wider acceptance in the region and beyond it. For us, the centre-piece of this peace process is and must remain full realization of the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which must lead to complete nationhood.

In conclusion, as we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and are about to usher in a new millennium, it is time for the world to take stock. The world leadership of today comes largely from a generation that saw violent conflicts, the untold devastation of societies and families and shattered hopes and dreams. We can, on the whole, visualize peace, though it is not yet assured in all regions. However, the vision of peace prevails over the vision of conflicts, and we must be determined to defend it. It is the vision of peace that we must bequeath to the next generation. That should be the gift of our time to the next century.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The next speaker is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, on whom I now call.

Mr. Mesfin (Ethiopia): Allow me first to extend to Ambassador Amara Essy heartfelt congratulations on his unanimous election to preside over the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. His election is a fitting tribute both to him and to his country, Côte d'Ivoire. While expressing our confidence in his skills and capacity to guide this session to a successful conclusion, I wish to assure him of the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of the heavy responsibility he has assumed.

I wish also to join the heads of delegations who spoke before me in the very pleasant task of welcoming the new democratic South Africa into the United Nations. The recent happy events in South Africa mark a turning point in the history of Africa. They have opened up new vistas for fruitful economic cooperation across the African continent and have allowed the international community to be victorious over institutional racism.

It has now been a few years since the international community entered into a new era relatively free of ideological polarization. The nuclear confrontation that had haunted the international community before the end of the cold war is now more or less behind us. The demise of the cold war has in this regard contributed to the lifting of the thick veil that had hindered the appreciation of our interdependence. None of the major problems of the present world can be effectively dealt with in the absence of an approach that takes seriously the fact that we live in an interdependent world. The challenges of the environment, the problems of climate change, the unrestrained growth in population and questions of economic growth and development, among others, are all issues that call for greater cooperation between States.

It is not too early for us to assess to what extent the international community has taken advantage of new opportunities and, with the major obstacles to joint action having now been removed, how much progress the world has made in addressing the critical problems facing us. Some of these ostensibly affect only part of humanity, but, in fact, are directly or indirectly the problems of the international community as a whole.

The ever-deteriorating economic and social conditions faced by the majority of the peoples in the developing world and the abject poverty in which they are condemned to live are the most critical challenge facing the world. The effects of this reality reverberate through all aspects of international life, and they impinge on all issues now routinely accepted as the common challenges of the international community. Actions designed to deal with concerns related to international peace and security, to the environment, to climate change, to population growth and development and to a

host of other interrelated concerns will remain only off-target and, at best, partial measures if most of the developing world is allowed to continue to wallow in poverty, and if, as a consequence, despair and hopelessness continue to be the dominant mood of present and future generations in the South.

In Africa, for instance, where a genuine fear of marginalization in international economic cooperation has in recent years become the prevailing mood, much of the explanation for the scale, intensity and duration of the conflicts must be sought in the continent's continuing economic decline and in the consequent social malaise and hopelessness generated by that sad reality. The economic history of Africa over the last two decades is one of precipitate decline. The 1980s was a lost decade, but the first half of the present one is proving to be no better.

Each African conflict may have its own unique local as well as extra-local features, but all of them, in one way or another, grow out of the humanly impossible economic and social situations that provide societies with neither hope nor a future.

From Liberia to Somalia and from Rwanda to Burundi, what Africa has been witnessing in recent years is the virtual collapse, under the weight of unbearable economic and social difficulties, not only of State structures but also of traditional values and norms of social organization.

It seems therefore overdue for the United Nations, when it comes to addressing conflict situations such as those in Africa, to think and to act with the clear assumption that traditional notions of preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-making, although important, are not enough to maintain the peace and to make it durable. "An Agenda for Peace" will be far from sufficient if it does not go side by side with, and made an integral part of, "An Agenda for Development".

In our part of the world, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) took up a huge challenge when it decided to increase its capacity by setting up a mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. This is an important step that requires the effective assistance of the international community, and we are appreciative of the support already being given to the OAU by some countries. But we have no illusions: even if the OAU had the capacity required to carry out its mandate in preventive diplomacy, it would not necessarily be able to make substantial inroads in ensuring durable peace in the continent.

Nor can the United Nations and the international community do any better unless the challenges faced in connection with preventive measures in the economic and social areas are taken up in the most serious manner and unless the economic and social decline of Africa is reversed. The bottom line is that no African country can categorically be said to be immune from the political and social consequences of the immense level of economic decline, which can be arrested only with the requisite level of international economic cooperation and development partnership. This, incidentally, could also be a way to arrest and contain all varieties of extremism.

It seems to us that it is only with the foregoing in mind and with the full appreciation of the very complex nature of some of the conflict situations in Africa that the United Nations can be an effective factor for peace in Africa. This approach would also allow the international community to appreciate fully actual movement, no matter how small, in the right direction towards the resolution of specific conflict situations in Africa. The validity of this is most clearly to be seen in the prevailing situation in Somalia.

More than a few still view the situation in Somalia as having shown no improvement and believe that conditions in that country have in fact deteriorated. That view is probably the major reason for the increasing calls for the speedy withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) from Somalia. That view is also certainly behind the latest Security Council resolution on Somalia.

The situation in Somalia, and most particularly in some parts of that country, is clearly still far from normal, and there is no question that the overall situation in the country is very fluid. The international community's frustration at the slow pace of the national-reconciliation process and at the lack of sufficient commitment by all sides in Somalia to their responsibility to sort out their own problems as speedily as possible is also understandable, and this is also our concern.

But the feeling that conditions in the country have become hopeless and that the general trend in Somalia holds no promise is not born of what has been taking place there since late last year. That the situation in Somalia today, from the point of view both of the level of armed clashes and of dialogue between Somalis of all

factions, is far better than it was a year ago, or indeed a few months ago, cannot seriously be doubted.

No one can pretend to have a ready-made solution to the problem of power-sharing in Somalia, which has been one of the major hurdles preventing national reconciliation. The OAU and the countries of the subregion have continued to do everything possible to assist the Somalis to meet this challenge, firmly convinced that the agenda for peace and national reconciliation in the country should be set by Somalis themselves and that the role of extra-Somali parties, including that of UNOSOM, is to assist in the process. We believe that this has been a very fruitful approach. It is the one that has been adopted from the very beginning by President Meles Zenawi, whose OAU colleagues have given him the responsibility of following developments in Somalia.

From his station in Mogadishu, President Meles's envoy has been maintaining very close contact with the various Somali factions. Our general assessment is that the trends in Somalia are encouraging and that the Somalis are taking the first hesitant steps to sort out their problems. Although there is no guarantee of success, the general thrust of developments in Somalia is worthy of the support of the international community.

At this time last year UNOSOM was engaged in heavy combat with some Somali factions, and its presence in Somalia did not enjoy universal acceptance there. Today, the situation has changed so dramatically that there is consensus in the country that UNOSOM should stay, one way or another, until national reconciliation is achieved. It would indeed be ironic if the international community were to choose to ignore Somalia precisely when the situation is changing for the better.

The efforts of the countries of the Horn of Africa in the search for solutions to situations of conflicts have not been limited to Somalia. It is little more than a year since we in the subregion deployed the initiative of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) with a view to assisting in the resolution of the long-standing conflict in the Sudan - a conflict which has created a deep rift in Sudanese society, and whose implications for peace and security, as well as for the social and economic development of our region, are very great indeed.

In the course of the negotiations, the IGADD Committee's major goal was to help the parties to identify and address the central issues that have been the sources of the conflict in the Sudan - a country characterized by religious, ethnic and racial diversity. Pursuant to instructions from our Heads of State, the IGADD Committee of Foreign Ministers attempted, in a series of rounds of negotiation, to help the parties to narrow their differences over the root causes of the conflict and to arrive at a formula for overcoming the deep crisis affecting their countries. Because the IGADD process induced the parties to focus on the critical issues in the conflict, positions have become well defined. The degree of polarity reflected in these positions reveals the gravity of the root causes and explains why the talks have come to deadlock. Thus, the IGADD peace process is at a crossroads in that the positions of the parties have hardened, and the mediators are left to choose between abandoning their efforts and developing alternative strategies in response to the crisis.

Faced with this situation, the Ministerial Committee was compelled ultimately to refer the matter back to the IGADD Committee of Heads of State, which met recently in Nairobi. The Heads of State, while recognizing the logjam that has been created in the process of negotiation, have none the less unanimously decided that there is no alternative to continuing with the peace effort. The major consideration here has been the conviction of the Heads of State that a persisting crisis in the Sudan would be not only a cause of continuing bloodshed in that country but also a major source of instability and lack of peace in the subregion.

In this regard, the importance of the international community's input towards breaking the logjam in the IGADD peace initiative in the Sudan can hardly be underestimated. A solution to the problem can come only through the continued efforts of the countries of the region and the international community's support for those efforts.

We in Ethiopia have had more than our share of the tragedies associated with conflicts. It is three years since peace was restored to the country following three decades of civil war and internal strife. Over the past three years, the Transitional Government has focused its attention on three broad concerns - the restoration of peace and stability; the democratization of the political process, including the creation of conditions for enforcing the rule of law and setting up democratic institutions; and the liberalization of the economy and the freeing of the economic sector from the strait-jacket of the command economy imposed on our peoples by the military Government.

One of the unique aspects of the democratization process in Ethiopia has been the very extensive devolution of power to all regions of the country. In a country known for its excessive centralization of power - something that was pushed to absurdity by the previous Government: the major reason for the absence of peace in Ethiopia for so long - the new relationship between the centre and the regions is becoming a promising arrangement for genuine and meaningful participation of the people, at the grass-roots level, in the political process of their country. We believe that once democracy becomes relevant to the average person and at the grass roots, it will prove to be durable because the struggle between autocracy and democratic forms of governance will not then be between very narrow, elite groups, whether from the military or from other sectors of society.

As we approach the end of the period of transition in Ethiopia, we can say with full confidence that we have, by and large, achieved all the major objectives set for that period. Until three years ago Ethiopia's name was associated with political instability and civil war. Today Ethiopia has not only achieved peace but also become a factor for peace in its own subregion and beyond, as is vividly demonstrated by the Ethiopian peace-keeping contingent in Rwanda.

Moreover, we have been gratified by the recent successful elections for a Constituent Assembly, which will be convened very soon to prepare a constitution on the basis of which a general election will be held to install the first-ever democratically elected Government in the country.

In the course of the last three years, we in Ethiopia have benefited immensely from the generous assistance of the international community, for which we are very grateful. This assistance was again demonstrated during the recent drought, which affected over 7 million people. Thanks to the assistance of the international community, to the role the Ethiopian people themselves played and to the timely, effective measures taken by the Government, the effects of a drought that could have caused massive loss of life, dislocation and displacement commensurate with those of the 1984-1985 drought were successfully contained.

Even though Ethiopia has now started to stand on its own feet, we cannot pretend that we have even remotely begun to address the major challenges still facing us. The fledgling democratic process in a country with no democratic traditions will continue to be a major challenge. But the political will to solidify grass-roots democracy will always be there, among other things because the survival of countries as diverse as Ethiopia can be ensured only on the basis of democratic governance. However, the linchpin of the success of democracy in Ethiopia, as is also true for all similarly situated countries, is sustainable economic growth and development. Citizens who see no future for themselves or for their offspring can hardly be counted on - and for understandable reasons - to be a bedrock for stable Governments, without which democracy will have little chance of flourishing.

None the less, even in the economic sector we have made some notable gains, and our cooperation with the international financial institutions has so far been very encouraging. But the challenges ahead of us are immense, and we will continue to count on the support of the international community to help us put our country firmly on the path of sustainable growth and development.

One of the major positive outcomes of the demise of the cold war has been the new confidence placed in multilateral approaches to solving the major problems faced by our interdependent world. The United Nations, as the finest expression of multilateralism, has thus been given a new opportunity to make a difference in the world and to spearhead the efforts of the international community for peace and development. In this context, the democratization of the United Nations at all levels, and greater transparency in the operation of the organs of the Organization, including that of the Security Council and of the Secretariat, are some of the required steps which will guarantee that the United Nations can play to the fullest its potential appropriate role as the foremost multilateral Organization with the full confidence of peoples in the North as well as in the South. For our part, we will continue to do our share, and do all that is necessary to assist the United Nations in achieving its noble objectives and goals.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): It is a special pleasure and honour for me to extend, to my brother Amara Essy, my delegation's warmest congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. He is a highly esteemed and valued friend to many of us, and we can rest assured that his vast diplomatic and political experience, coupled with his proven leadership qualities, will guide this Assembly through a very productive and successful session.

The Assembly is also most grateful for the exemplary and skilful manner in which Ambassador

Insanally successfully conducted the affairs of the forty-eighth session during his tenure as President.

We must also recognize the dynamic and resourceful manner in which the Secretary-General has guided the Secretariat of the United Nations during this period of momentous internal and worldwide change. That the ordinary citizens of the world and its many poor have a humane and sensitive advocate in the halls of power of the United Nations is a great stabilizing factor. We wish the Secretary-General well in his unending efforts to bring peace and development to all corners of our troubled world.

As our Organization moves towards its fiftieth year, there is an air of concern for the state of the world, its people and the United Nations itself. Building upon our emphasis last year on the rights of the individual, the purview of the international community has expanded to encompass the right of the individual to a better economic and social life. The population Conference at Cairo highlighted the pressures of population on economic growth and development, and marked specific areas for action, with targets and goals, and next year's Copenhagen conference on social development will explore widespread poverty and unemployment, and the critical issue of social integration. We have come to realize that these problems cannot be solved in isolation by any of the principal actors - individuals, States or even the international community. Only by cooperating and working together to reinforce the special attributes of each can we begin to arrest the pervasive social disintegration, endemic conflict and world disorder that threaten our security and our future. Fortunately, in the United Nations, whatever its limitations, we have a truly international Organization at the centre of all these issues, which needs only proper use and reinforcement to reverse these corrosive trends.

As we review the developments of the past year in the light of the triumphs and tragedies experienced by the world body and by the international community, the picture which emerges is one of persistent conflict and pervasive poverty. Happily, some perennial points of antagonism, such as South Africa and Palestine, have witnessed extraordinary developments. For some, the dramatic accord between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, negotiated entirely by the Palestinians themselves, continues to be viewed with a measure of astonishment. True enough, the accord will not satisfy everyone, and conditions remain on future progress, but after so many decades of having a minimal voice in their destiny and of paltry changes in their condition, the Palestinians have made the first real breakthrough towards a Palestinian State. Efforts towards political and democratic institutionalization and administrative refinement, accompanied by widespread political participation and empowerment, are evolving slowly and may demonstrate to the international community the level of support lent by Palestinians to the direction implied by the accords. The substantial international assistance pledged and envisaged to underwrite the requisite stability and progress must be forthcoming in order to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian governing authority, and to achieve the goals of a functioning and efficient Palestinian entity.

The Palestinians have suffered long and hard under a harsh and often difficult occupation, enduring numerous false starts and misdirected illusions. They have now embarked on the road to self-determination and should receive the total support of the international community. But the eventual realization of a full Palestinian State must be clear, and any measures tending to render the occupied territories merely "self-administered" Bantustans, supplying labor to Israel's more developed economy, must be resisted by all means.

Not only the continent of Africa, but the entire world must take pride in the remarkable progress unfolding in South Africa. Under the inspiring and extraordinary leadership of President Mandela, South Africa has become an exemplary model for the international community of national reconciliation and unity. During the recent dramatic period in its history, South Africa was likewise fortunate to have had a visionary in the person of Mr. de Klerk, who was aware of the role of timing and recognized the need for change. While there have been many players in the struggle against apartheid, certainly none are more deserving of praise and recognition than the majority people of South Africa themselves. South Africa cannot fail to appreciate that all of Africa, and in fact the world, shares in its joy. We can only urge President Mandela and his country to continue to work together to advance the task of restructuring South Africa so that it truly realizes its undoubted greatness.

By now the world is painfully aware of the fate of Rwanda, torn apart by sheer hatred and intolerance, by leaders bent upon exploiting ethnic differences for selfish gains. Employing all manner of fear, intimidation and propaganda, they succeeded in stirring up nearly an entire people to turn against another, until the eventual human carnage, in so compressed a time span, was no doubt

unequalled in human history. Even now, the intransigent leadership of the millions of suffering Hutus, eking out a bare existence in the volcanic soils of eastern Zaire or the other surrounding countries, refuses to acknowledge the plight of their people, dissuading them with threats and violence from returning to their country. Their actions cannot be pardoned; the perpetrators of this insane episode must be brought to justice and punished. Otherwise, their implacable goal of rearming and returning one day to the battle field promises a long night of recurring horror for Central Africa.

Regrettably, by paying no heed to the early signs of pending troubles, and by seeking ways to severely limit its involvement, the world body lost the opportunity to play a significant part in preventing this tragedy. Worse still, the difficulty in assembling and suitably equipping a United Nations peace-keeping force has not helped to instil in those who have fled the confidence needed to return, and in those who have remained the confidence needed to stay.

All this leaves the new Government of Rwanda in the throes of a critical dilemma, requiring immeasurable soul searching. For a country from which nearly one-third of the population has fled - in the case of Rwanda some 2 million people - the numbers are so large and disproportionate as to deny the Government a large measure of the legitimacy it badly needs. Something very serious must be done to bring the two peoples together in meaningful national reconciliation, with a Government that reflects this. Certainly the spirit and intent of the Arusha Accord remains even more valid today in the light of what has taken place.

Note must also be taken of the valiant efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), facing terrible odds in a situation of such frightening chaos. Despite its small numbers, its attempts to alleviate the suffering and protect the vulnerable undoubtedly saved many lives and provided a measure of sanity in a sea of madness. The world body should recognize with pride and great appreciation what has been done by the personnel of UNAMIR and its illustrious leader, General Romeo Dallaire of Canada.

One reason for pessimism in Central Africa is the fact that so many of the factors that led to breakdown in Rwanda are also present in Burundi. There the ominous rise in killings, coupled with the accelerating pace of rearmament, should cause extreme concern to the world community. With the army at the epicentre of power, and with weapons calling the shots, so to speak, government and politics could remain tense and unstable. However, we are strongly encouraged by the recent indications of an emerging political consensus, as evidenced by the installation of a new president. This is a positive trend which we hope will manifest itself in all aspects of political, economic and social activity.

The plights of Angola and of Liberia are likewise grave; both are locked in a destructive state of shooting negotiations. In both, the humanitarian situation is again regressing and a cease-fire is nowhere in sight; the gun is again the preferred method of voting. Fortunately, progress toward peace and an elected national Government is still on course in Mozambique, where the leadership seems to be serious about ending the prolonged and destructive state of conflict and engaging for the first time in building a democratic State through national elections, scheduled for October this year.

The United Nations Observer Mission in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) is determined to fulfil all targets and tasks on schedule and believes in the prospects of success for the people of Mozambique. Its strong efforts reinforce those of the people and, together, they should be a commendable success story for the United Nations and Mozambique.

In Haiti, the long-anticipated international intervention, sanctioned in Security Council resolution 940 (1994), has taken place. A multinational force has peacefully secured the country, thanks in large measure to the good deal of prudence shown, and the intense diplomatic efforts undertaken, by the United States. We are pleased that the junta has deemed it unwise to oppose the world, and instead has agreed to relinquish power in order to facilitate the return of the democratically elected President, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

In other areas, Djibouti remains saddened by the status quo in the bilateral discussions between the two Gulf neighbours, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, concerning the three islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. We believe there is an urgent need for a renewed and serious effort to resolve this dispute through all possible peaceful avenues, including referring it to the International Court of Justice.

Bosnia remains a high-profile international flashpoint. Despite the warning of dire consequences, the Bosnian Serbs have rejected the final compromise proposal of the five-nation Contact Group, which awards them 49 per cent of the country, over two-thirds of which

they have taken by force. In the weeks since the rejection, nothing has been done to punish the Bosnian Serbs, as it had been intimated would be done. In fact, the Serbs continue to apply consistent pressure on the Bosnian Government and the United Nations, targeting Sarajevo and its airport, blocking United Nations food convoys and strangling safe areas such as Srebrenica and Gorazde. Even "ethnic cleansing" has resumed. One shudders to think what would have happened immediately if it had been the Muslim party that had rejected the proposal.

This inaction reflects the blatant unwillingness of the international community to take any meaningful action against the culprits, let alone punish them. This only encourages further intransigence. The Serb reaction to difficult situations consists in resorting to wild, radical behaviour, eliciting retreat and concessions by the peacemakers. One can never say what they will do tomorrow, which means their word today has no intrinsic value. To have rewarded Belgrade with a loosening of the sanctions in the absence of a viable and comprehensive peace agreement or concrete proof of compliance is to mistake the form of this family dispute for its substance - perhaps because there is none. And what is the benefit for the Bosnian Government, which agreed to the peace plan? Will steps be taken to remedy the onerous military and humanitarian imbalance? Will Serbia-Montenegro recognize Bosnia within its current borders or agree to cooperate with the International Tribunal? The proper course of action, in the absence of any semblance of sanity and settlement, is to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Government. What else?

I would now like to address the question of Somalia. The return to a functioning civil society in Somalia is, if anything, even more remote, as meaningful inter-faction talks have ceased, security is evaporating, the dream of national reconciliation fading and the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) focused on the process of withdrawing. The only certainty in Somalia is political uncertainty. As a neighbour that has observed and knows all too well Somalia's convulsive history, Djibouti can only be distressed at the continuing problems and utter hopelessness.

What is to be done? For too long the United Nations has sought voluntary disarmament, conferences of national reconciliation, interim government and hopefully, in the end, a government elected by the people. Creating pressure for this process is the looming departure of UNOSOM scheduled for 31 March 1995, when operations may be closed down. Although we anticipate that the people will ultimately have the final say through elections, at present it is the warlords and their factions that have been given a comprehensive veto. On the assumption that they are the powers that be in Somalia, considerable time has been spent attempting to gain their agreement in the hope of eventually reaching the people through them. But clearly the faction leaders desire the political process to stop with them without flowing through to the people. So at their door everything stops, and the people are never given a say or an input.

The obvious plan of the faction leaders is undoubtedly to induce the United Nations to believe conditions are propitious for withdrawal and then to settle scores among themselves until someone is victorious. But in the process, can we discount the possibility of a return to conditions of starvation and famine, the kind of Somalia that existed prior to the arrival of the United Nations? What will be the immediate and long-term consequences or implications of leaving Somalia in anarchy to the forlorn women, children and innocent population of Somalia and to its neighbours, which are already weighed down under an incessant flow of refugees? Will there be a Somali State in the end? Perhaps yes, perhaps no. It is hard, however, to preclude a positive eventuality, however far-fetched that may seem at present.

Clearly, what is absent from the whole process is the voice of the people in the selection of true, legitimate leadership and government to counter the present abdication of power to bands of gun-holders. We must find ways of directly giving voice to the people, leading straight to legitimate government. Solidifying these steps would then be the job of ample United Nations forces on hand, drawing upon this Organization's experience in Cambodia, Mozambique and elsewhere. Certainly, the thought of leaving Somalia with nothing in place and so many lives at risk is both abhorrent and unacceptable, a case where it will be interpreted that a "failed State" has been abandoned by the United Nations. Walking out of a society in a mess before reconstituting it as a functioning entity will undeniably mark a precedent in the history of the United Nations and will certainly represent a far cry from the hopes, promises and commitments enshrined in the Charter.

Although I have briefly explored situations in a number of world trouble spots, the sad fact is that others appear to be gathering wind in their sails, ready to burst forth. Consequently, demands for expanded United Nations involvement can be expected to rise, and the

question that must again be asked, based upon recent experiences is: Could the Organization cope? More and more we see peace-keeping patterns of an ad hoc nature, struggling under the lack of equipment, logistics, intelligence and manpower, poor coordination and communications. But the fault can hardly be laid at the feet of the United Nations if its urgent requests for material and human resources are not met or are met slowly or inadequately. With no force or equipment of its own, and therefore required to begin each operation from scratch, the resulting delays have severely hampered timely United Nations reaction - leading, for example, to genocide in Rwanda. And all this says nothing of the difficulties stemming from ever-dwindling resources.

Such a state of affairs must be a cause for concern, as the United Nations will increasingly be forced to limit its responses to diplomatic initiatives, such as we have seen in Haiti. In place of classic peace-keeping, we will witness a growing reliance upon ad hoc multinational intervention, the so-called posse response, but that too has its limitations - for we are concerned with whether there is to be meaningful collective security. If United Nations peace-keeping withers, and in its place we are forced to rely on ad hoc interventions, then we need to ask under what basis that involvement will be forthcoming. In view of these developing trends, the United Nations may be forced to rely more upon simply letting conflicts run their natural course, as in Somalia.

What this situation amply demonstrates is that the United Nations needs a well-trained, mobile, standing force with rapid deployment capability. Delayed deployment of undermanned and under-equipped units, as was the situation in Rwanda, fails to inspire confidence. The availability of a rapid reaction force may at least address a good number of probable conflict situations, often serving as a deterrent simply by virtue of being in a position to act quickly.

It is fashionable these days to say that we live in an international world, a "global village" in which nations can no longer avoid the effects of developments in their neighbours or the world. For Djibouti, this fact has a particularly telling impact, for we have been forced to grapple with the effects of years of past instability, warfare and massive national disintegration in the Horn of Africa, as in Somalia at present. From the financially debilitating incursion of heavily armed militia to the equally draining cost of demobilization that we face right now; to the flood of refugees, the care and cost of which has overwhelmed our infrastructure and health, educational and housing services; to the crippling loss of vital markets, as in Somalia, for our services; coupled with the devastation brought by the seemingly unending drought and pestilence, Djibouti has inevitably been slowly moving towards negative growth and development in the last few years.

Yet, whatever the extent of our difficulties arising from these circumstances, Djibouti has steadfastly sought to remain a good-neighbourly State, contributing, to the extent permitted by our meagre resources, to regional stability and peace efforts.

Moreover, recognizing the need to further involve the people of Djibouti in the complex process of development and governance, we have overhauled our political structure and institutions.

Still there remains a disturbing predicament facing Djibouti and other countries like it in the world, namely that countries which are relatively stable, moderate and democratic and which are contributing, and participating in international efforts, to bring relief, reduce tensions, halt aggression and conflict tend to be overlooked by the international community. Despite the drain on our meagre resources because of refugees and market losses, and despite our continuing positive contributions to regional and international peace efforts, it seems that the general calm and freedom prevailing in my country are lulling the world into believing that there are no really pressing concerns or needs or for assistance. Too often, little attention is paid to a nation, it seems, until it is too desperate and near collapse, or until it is perceived by the international community as a source of new danger to peace and security, thereby qualifying it for aid and assistance. This makes little sense, and is indeed a mockery of the preventive measures that are often mentioned but seldom instituted. We deserve better, but we remain quite confident that both our efforts and our urgent needs for critical resources will be recognized by our friends and development partners.

Djibouti, and all the countries of the Horn, have been subjected to the ravages of destructive natural causes, well beyond our individual power to cope with them. Such is the inexorable drift of the Sahara southward, or the severe drought conditions leading to famine which now plagues the Horn. Overall, an estimated 20 million people are at risk in 10 countries, facing farms that are parched, rivers that are dried up, and pestilence. Anticipating possible mass starvation resulting from the lack of rain and water, food stocks

were made ready, only to be virtually depleted by a sudden emergency elsewhere, as in Rwanda. A pervasive air of hopelessness and apprehension now grips the nations of the Horn, the urgency of which merits the immediate concern and attention of the international community.

Adding to the difficulties arising from natural causes, nations just as often face social forces over which they have little control. Domestic macro-economic policies in many industrialized countries, seeking to combat inflation or balance international payments, often have drastic effects on the demand for third-world products and on commodity prices. The result, as one analyst explains, is frequently declining terms of trade, sharply increased interest rates, reduced exports, massive increases in current account deficits, interest and debt-service payments, all at a time of reduced aid and other capital flows. External payment restraints, in particular, have affected levels of domestic production in both industrial and agricultural sectors, at times even production for export, leading to inflation, acute financial crises and mounting debt.

Many third world countries simply lack the economic capacity and flexibility to react in the short term. In the long run, everyone benefits from greater coherence and efficiency in the international economic system. Clearly the world's economic and financial system requires much more order, predictability, coordination and fairness.

Along these lines, I feel it is imperative to refer again to the issue of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields - in particular the relevant General Assembly resolutions bearing particularly on the vital field of operational activities for development, and the General Assembly's important coordinating role. As the most truly representative body of the world's people and States, the General Assembly needs to return to its original role as contemplated by the founding Member States and set forth in the Charter. It must provide a more decisive lead in strategy and policy, in reviewing, in critiquing and approving the operation of the total system.

Likewise, as opposed to the extreme decentralization current in United Nations economic activities and institutions - each one a separate entity unto itself, often at cross purposes - we must also return to the original role foreseen in the Charter for the Economic and Social Council as an economic security council. The Economic and Social Council must remain open to receive and address the concerns of Africa, which should not be hampered in its effective and beneficial participation in the Council and its subsidiary bodies. In this regard, we welcomed the Secretary General's report "An Agenda for Development", which provided the opportunity for a comprehensive review of world economic and social problems, particularly in Africa. Africa's development concerns have been well documented in General Assembly resolution 48/214 on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which we hope can serve as a basis on which the international community can act in solidarity in mobilizing new and additional resources to solve the pressing problems of the poor. For if we are to address constructively the questions of economic growth and development, of the formulation of truly beneficial international macro-economic systems, we need to begin to take those confidence- building measures that will bring the North and the South closer and strengthen the concept of partnership.

In the area of collective security, there remains the imperative need to expand the Security Council and to make it more transparent and democratic through an increase in its membership and by making it more accountable to the General Assembly. There should be periodic reviews of the Council's structure and functions in line with international developments. A more equitable geographical representation is critical, along with an increase in permanent representation for developing countries.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.